

# CURRICULUM COUNCIL

October 28, 2010

Minutes

☐ Welcome

☐ Continuing Our Focus

- Continued support of writer's workshop K - 8
- Continued support of SAS & curriculum development in the Toolbox
- Integration of literacy strategies across content areas

☐ Department/Grade Level Meetings (*Clarification & Discussion*)

- We had a lengthy discussion regarding the department/grade-level meetings, which would be difficult to summarize; however, I will include some general points that will hopefully answer questions and summarize main points:
  - As per the contract, meetings should be either department or grade-level and are held one time per month for 30 minutes when all people representative of the group can meet. Department meetings are secondary content areas (i.e. All 6 - 12 English teachers); grade-level meetings are grade-level specific (i.e. all second grade teachers).
  - Following the September meeting, council members provided a general meeting plan for their department. Of the meeting plans received, most included general ideas, but only one provided teachers the ability to meet as a full department/grade-level group. Buildings currently having only one grade-level teacher or one content area teacher would have no ability to meet with other members of their department.
  - In order to keep us focused as a district, a plan was put together that attempts to make the monthly meetings productive, meaningful, and flexible to your groups. This includes:
    - Book studies relevant to integrating writing, engaging in writing, or conferring with students about their writing; providing consistency across the district, focus on a common mission, and content that is immediately relevant to teaching and learning.
    - Wiki discussion groups that have been set up in order to enable teachers to work as a department or grade-level group without being in the same place at the same time.
- Council members were set to engage in a book study for this year, which included a study of *Because Writing Matters: Improving Student Writing in Our Schools*. The book is endorsed by the National Writing Project and engages content area teachers in a reading helpful for using writing as a vehicle for teaching the content. Again, this approach provides relevancy to content-specific instruction, which can now be shared among all secondary faculty members.
- Elementary teachers will have available to them two books which will serve as additional professional development specific to writer's workshop. The primary focus book is titled *Engaging Young Writers* and is written by Matt Glover. The second through fifth grade book is focused on conferring and is titled, *How's It Going?* by Carl Anderson.
- The guidance department will also be participating in a book study. The book that has been chosen is *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander* by Barbara Coloroso.
- All teachers will receive 3.5 hours of Act 48 credit for their time throughout the year provided they are active contributors to the wiki discussion group.

- It is our hope that all teachers take advantage of this as an opportunity to enhance teaching and learning across the district.
- Principals and council members will communicate information during their next faculty meeting.
- Books are ordered (Most have arrived and will be distributed in the near future.)
- Discussion groups have been set up and can be found on the wiki.

☐ 2010 Book Study: *Because Writing Matters: Improving Student Writing in Our Schools*  
**Introduction** (Discussion)

- Points of interest:
  - *Because Writing Matters* (BWM) sets the stage for writing in all content areas. This is not to say that “writing across the curriculum” per se is going to be the focus. The point is more about how all teachers can use writing to teach their content, to teach higher level thinking skills, and to engage students in the act of writing for real and relevant purposes.
  - “Writing is a gateway for success in academia, the new workplace, and the global economy, as well as for our collective success as a participatory democracy.”
  - Comments were made about this being a focus years ago, but teachers were not given the necessary professional development to learn how.
    - Daphne commented that the January 17<sup>th</sup> professional development day will be the first opportunity for high school teachers to begin learning more about the process. Two National Writing Project teachers/trainers will work with the group for a full day. Teachers will be working with their content and their lessons while learning more about integration of writing strategies. More information will be provided in the future.

☐ Reading Apprenticeship – Cohort 2 – Attendees:

- |                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Beverly Abram - English           | • Karen Klock – Special Education   |
| • Brian Beward – Social Studies     | • Tamie Kratzer – Special Education |
| • Matt Dietz – Technology Education | • Daniel Lysak – BCIT               |
| • Thor Edmiston – Art               | • Monica Romig – World Languages    |
| • Dave Fadale – Mathematics         | • Nick Slotterback – Health & PE    |
| • Dave Harrison – Admin             | • Clint Swartz – Science            |

☐ Textbook Matrix – Due before you leave for Christmas break (*Reminder*)

☐ Howard Gardner to Speak – November 10, 2010 @ 7:00 PM (*Reminder*)  
 Mitrani Hall, Haas Center for the Performing Arts, Bloomsburg University



“Writing is the absolute center of a student-centered classroom.” *James Moffett*